

## **Trail Rebuilding on McNabs Island Continues**

**Story by Cathy McCarthy**

After years of wishing and hoping and waiting for the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to put some funding into McNabs and Lawlor Islands Provincial Park, the Friends of McNabs Island took the initiative on our own to raise funds for the island park.

According to the Management Plan for the park, McNabs Island is supposed to be developed as a “natural environment” park that encourages passive recreational activities such as hiking, cycling, skiing and snowshoeing. Sadly Hurricane Juan and the subsequent clearing of the trails by heavy equipment left much of the extensive trails system in ruin. So the Friends of McNabs Island sought out funds to rebuild the trail system.

With funding from many sources, we successfully raised \$271,700 for the first phase of the McNabs Island Trail Project. We had hoped that we could stretch our fundraising dollars to repair several trails on the island but DNR insisted that Garrison Road should be repaired first. This road is the main corridor trail on the island and serves as a maintenance road for the federal and provincial owners.

Costs to rebuild Garrison Road to DNR’s specifications are extremely high. Extensive amounts of gravel had to be barged over to the island, ditches had to be dug and culverts installed. The worst stretch near Findlay Cove where everyone got their feet wet trying to dodge the huge puddles had to be completely rebuilt.

This year, we turn our attention to rebuilding some of the secondary trails. DNR tells us that an archaeological study needs to be done along the Colin Stewart Trail, which winds its way around McNabs Pond through the McNab Family Homestead toward Fort McNab National Historic Site. DNR requires a landscape plan for the Teahouse and Hugonin-Perrin Victorian Gardens area before any trail improvements can be done there. Hopefully these studies can be done early this spring so that trail improvements in these areas can be completed this year.

For all this trail work to continue, the Friends must raise even more funds than we did last year. Estimates based on the work done so far indicate that rebuilding the trails on McNabs Island will cost over \$1million. This is a lot of money to raise, for a not-for-profit registered charity with no staff resources to rely on.

We have applied for funding from government programs, businesses and foundations, but we need the help of our membership. If you can help in any way with this capital campaign, either by making tax-deductible contributions yourself, helping with funding proposals or introducing us to businesses and organizations that might help, please let us know.

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